TO MY WIFE.

'Tis many a year since you and I,
In holy troth and faith,
Joined heart and hand, and vowed to be
Husband and wife till death.

Ah me, how much of good and ill,
Of pleasure and of pain,
Our eyes have seen, our hearts have felt,
Dear wife, dear heart, since then!

Yet in our humble home-nest we
Still happy sit, and sing
A sweeter song than skylarks trill,
In praise of love and spring.

When winter comes to us, and clouds
Obscure the light of day,
We murmur not, because we know
That we have had our May;

We know behind the clouds the sun
Shines somewhere in the blue,
And that the darkest night but brings
The stars more clear to view.

By bearing one another's griefs,
Their weight one-half is less,
And sharing one another's joys,
We double happiness;

Life, measured by this golden rule,
Becomes, despite the tears
Which sometimes blur the bluest skies,
A round of happy years.

And with this golden rule, dear wife,
We ever will comply,
In sweet contentment seeing thus
The tide of time glide by.

Ready, whate'er the outcome be,
Life's shade or shine to share,
Content to know its issues are
Safe in our Father's care.

They truest live who live for love,
Love is life's crown of bliss,
The soul of life is deathless love—
Who loves immortal is!

—Charles W. Hunter, in Atlanta Constitution.

An Army Wife.

BY CAPTAIN CHARLES KING.

[Copyrighted, 1896, by F. Tennyson Neely.]

SYNOPSIS.

Chapter I. — Fannie McLane, a young widow, is invited to visit the Graftons at Fort Sedgwick. Her sister tries to dissuade her, as Randolph Merriam (whom she had jilted for old McLane) and his bride are stationed there.

Chapter II.—Fannie McLane's wedding causes family feeling. A few months later she, while traveling with her husband, meets Merriam on his wedding trip.

Chapter III.—Some time previous to this Merriam had gone on a government survey, fallen ill, and had been nursed by Mrs. Tremaine and daughter Florence. A hasty note from Mrs. McLane's stepson takes him to the plains.

Chapter IV.—Young McLane dictates to Merriam a dying message, which is sent to Parry (a young Chicago lawyer and brother-in-law of Mrs. McLane). Reply causes Merriam to swoon. He is taken to the Tremaine's; calls for Florence.

Chapter V. — Engagement of Florence Tremaine to Merriam is announced; wedding shortly follows.

Chapter VI.—Mr. McLane is mysteriously shot in San Francisco. Merriam is greatly excited when he reads account in papers. While still in mourning Mrs. McLane prepares to visit Fort Sedgwick.

Chapter VII.—Mrs. McLane arrives at the fort. Merriam is startled at the news, and he and his wife absent themselves from the formal hop that evening.

Chapter VIII.—Mr. and Mrs. Merriam pay their respects to the widow on an evening when she would be sure to have many other callers. When the call is returned Merriam is away, and his wife pleads illness as excuse for not seeing her. Mrs. McLane receives telegram: "Arrested, Chicago. Your uncle stricken—paralysis. You will be summoned. Secure papers, otherwise lose everything. C. M." She faints and is revived with difficulty.

Chapter IX.—Mrs. McLane desires to see Merriam. Grafton persuades him to go, but the widow postpones the meeting till next noon.

Chapter X. — Florence learns Merriam has been to see Mrs. McLane, and in a storm of passion will not allow him to explain. Shortly after Merriam is intercepted by Fannie McLane as he is passing throughGrafton's yard. Florence witnesses the meeting, which she supposes has been prearranged.

Chapter XI.—Mrs. McLane begs Merriam for papers given him by her stepson, but which he tells her were all forwarded to Parry. Merriam is seriously wounded in fight with greasers.

Chapter XII.—Florence, in her deep disappointment, leaves her home in the night for her father's at the cantonment.

Chapter XIII.—Three personal telegraph messages come for Merriam from Parry. Latter is notified of Merriam's mishap miles from post. A dispatch from her lawyer on his way to the fort, together with account of serious injuries to Merriam, causes Mrs. McLane to faint.

Chapter XIV.—Merriam is brought in in the ambulance, inquires for Florence, but gets only an evasive answer, doctor fearing news of her flight may prove fatal to him.

Chapter XV.—During absence of hospital attendant Mrs. McLane steals in on Merriam, hoping to get from him some papers or information; tells him of his wife's disappearance. Randy staggers out to the stable, and is shortly galloping madly off over the mesa. Mrs. McLane breaks down, tells of dying message of her stepson to effect that the first Mrs. McLane was alive at time of her (Fannie's) marriage, and of the blackmail and extortion practiced on McLane by his first wife and her family. Finally this Mrs. McLane agreed to leave him on payment of a big cash sum. McLane hears that his Sacramento wife had married again, but lawyers sent to investigate are confronted by the news of her death.

CHAPTER XV.—CONTINUED.

They found her grave, headstone and all, but could get no trace of her long-devoted lover. It was surmised that he had taken what was left of the money and gone elsewhere in search of consolation. McLane came back to New York, met Fanny Hayward, fell in love, and Uncle Mellen urged the match in every way; and we know the result. There was a fortnight in which McLane seemed the happiest of men. Then came a shock. Fanny found him nearly crazed with trouble. A letter had come purporting to be from that supposed-to-be-dead woman demanding further heavy payment as the price of her silence. McLane honestly told Fan the truth, and was astonished at her decision. She bade him "pay the money and have done with it."

They might have doubted the genuineness of her letter, but there was no doubting that of young McLane's dying statement, witnessed by the officers from Sedgwick. He declared his mother alive. And so one crime led to another. No sooner had they reached California than the whole Perkins family seemed resurrected, and blackmail was their business. The eldest sister demanded heavy hush-money, and it was paid. The second sister turned up with her husband and a preposterous demand. It was they who haunted him at the San Francisco club, and the man, drunk and triumphant, insolently demanding money that night, had fired that well-nigh fatal shot when repudiated, defied, and struck. The very next day at their hotel came a letter warning them to silence as to the identity of the assailants. So long as these latter were allowed to escape arrest they would keep the secret, but if arrested and brought to trial they would proclaim McLane a bigamist. All this was made known to Uncle Mellen, and he, too, backed the niece's cause and kept up the deception. But no one could tell where the first wife was hidden. "She will be produced when needed, and her money must be paid through her sister." The money, a large sum, was paid, and then there was temporary peace. But McLane drooped and died under the weight of shame and anxiety. There was quarreling between the widow and the guardian and further demands from those cormorants, who now openly threatened to claim the dead man's estate for the widow and her son—they, at least, knew nothing of the latter's death; and then Fanny, coming to Sedgwick, tried to reassert her old sovereignty over Merriam and to gain possession of the papers of which her husband had told her and which Randy had long since sent to Parry, but concerning which she had never spoken to her brother-in-law, believing him to be ignorant of their existence; and it pleased Ned Parry to let her live on in ignorance that he had them. He took a curious interest in making a study of her, and had, without consulting his client, a more than professional interest in the case.

But now Bullock, the man who shot McLane, had been traced to and arrested in Chicago, together with his dashing helpmeet. Uncle Mellen had been prostrated by paralysis as a result of the news. The secret could be no longer kept, and Fanny McLane, hunted, desperate, self-deluded, and self-drugged, believed herself a ruined woman when at last Ned Parry came.

Too ill to see him, she seemed at least relieved to know he had come, and that night in Grafton's parlor he sat gravely listening to Harriet's recital of what Fanny had detailed to her, making no comment, but taking it all in, when, just at tattoo, a trooper dismounted at the gate and bore to Mrs. Grafton a brief missive from her husband. It was written that morning nearly 20 miles northwest of Jose's ranch.

"You must prepare Merriam for the worst," it said. "There is reason to believe poor Florence has fallen into the hands of a little band of Apaches. The sign is unmistakable and we are just starting in pursuit."

CHAPTER XVI.

Late that anxious night one battalion of the riflers returned to Sedgwick, Hayne's company one of the four, and very grave he looked when told of the events of the past 48 hours. Acting on the report of Capt. Grafton that Apache signs had been found in the foothills north of Jose's, Buxton had ordered another troop to march to reenforce him, and this troop Hayne obtained permission to accompany. It marched at dawn, so he had barely three hours in which to prepare. Mr. Parry, wearied with his journeying and many cares, had been escorted to Merriam's vacated quarters by Whittaker some little time before midnight, and there he was made welcome by Hop Ling and given the room abandoned by the master of the house so short a time before. Many people, between anxiety as to the fate of their beloved Florence and their eagerness to receive the riflers on their return, sat up until two o'clock; but Parry, though filled with anxiety as keen, was well aware that nothing was to be gained by his spending a wakeful night and listening to all manner of theory as to the cause of the fair fugitive's sudden deflection from the road to the ranch. Hayne, therefore, did not meet nor see him, but, as soon as it was light, rode forth ahead of the troop, meaning to go first to Jose's, see his wife and Dr. Gould, and then strike out northward, confident of meeting the second troop somewhere in the open country that there spread for miles before him.

Buxton had sent a party on the trail of Merriam within an hour of his dash and with orders to bring him back to the post, but they had not been heard from since their start, "and," said Whittaker, "they're not likely to be. Those fellows barely ride one mile to Randy's two. It's my belief he will just pull up at Jose's and then go straight on to the foothills, as probably she did."

But Randy was having a ride the like of which was not recorded in the annals of Fort Sedgwick since the days when, long before the war, the First Dragoons and the Navajos battled for the mastership of the Santa Clara. Ignorant as yet of the report of Apaches in the foothills of the Mescalero, his one theory was that she had gone to Jose's, intending from there to push on to the cantonment. The thought of her daring so long and so hard a ride at a time when she should be guarded with the utmost care was in itself a source of dire distress to him, and he could hardly have speeded faster and with grimmer determination to defy all pain or weariness had he dreamed of the deadly perils that lurked about her path. Of the fact that Valdez and his few followers had eventually fled northward and across the road to the Catamount he had heard nothing. Through Hop Ling's chatter he had gathered that Grafton and his men were gone in search of Florence and that Mrs. Hayne and Dr. Gould were at Jose's. He dare not stop to make inquiries at the garrison. He was under medical care—therefore under doctor's orders, and on complaint of the acting surgeon it would be perfectly competent for Buxton to place him in close arrest. His one idea, therefore, was to put as much ground as possible between the post and himself. He know he could get another horse at Jose's, so Brown Dick was never spared an instant. At three o'clock, galloping free, the gallant horse was stretching away northwestward over the low, rolling earth-waves that seemed to spread to the very lap of the Mescalero, spanning the horizon foward the setting sun. Far behind him, the scattered ranches and the sparse green foliage of the Santa Clara. Far away on either hand, the lumpy, sandy barren, dotted everywhere with little dull-hued tufts of coarse herbage or stunted sage. Ahead of him the tortuous, twisting, dusty trail, dented with scores of hoof-prints, the tracks of Grafton's troop on its way to the rescue. By this time Randy was burning with thirst, but the water in his canteen was warm and nauseating. He raised the felt-covered flask to his lips from time to time and rinsed his mouth and moistened his parching throat, but that did not allay the craving. He had still 30 miles to go before he could reach Jose's and exchange Brown Dick for a broncho, and have Dr. Gould renew the dressing of his wounded arm. He knew that Florence had failed to appear there, but he knew her pluck and spirit, and believed he knew the reason—that there might be sojourners there either from the Catamount or from the post who would seek to turn her back or hold her there; and he knew that in her overwrought, half-maddened state she was starving for her mother's petting and her father's arms. He knew her so well that any attempt to dissuade her now would result, he felt assured, only in frantic outburst and more determined effort to push ahead.

Then he had another and even better reason for thinking he could quickly find Mignon's trail, although it might be miles to the north of Jose's. On their return from their latest visit to the Catamount they were having a glorious run with the hounds one lovely November morning, and the jackrabbits led them far out to the north of the road among the buttes and bowlders that clustered about the course of a little stream, barely a yard wide anywhere, that rippled out from among the foothills only to be lost in the sands of the desert to the east. One vigorous old rabbit, close followed by the hounds, had tacked suddenly and darted up this narrow valley, and Floy and Mignon, all excitement, darted after him, while Randy, guiding Brown Dick behind, watched with fond, proud eyes his young wife's graceful, fearless riding. Far up toward the head of the brook poor jack had been tossed

A brief missive from her husband.

in air by the pointed muzzle of his closest pursuer and then pounced upon by the panting hounds, and Randy found that they were in a little amphitheater among the buttes—found the little spring in which the streamlet had its birth, and there they dismounted and unsaddled and let the horses roll; and here they took their luncheon, and had a happy, loving hour, all alone with the horses and hounds in this little world of their own; and Floy had named the spot—a fond, foolish little caprice, perhaps, and vowed that it was to be her refuge by-and-by. "This is where I am coming to build my lonely cloister one of these days, when you grow weary of me, sir," she had laughingly said. And now, as he plied spurs to Dick's heaving sides, Randy wondered, wondered whether it might not be that she had made that wide detour around Jose's purposely to find and revisit that romantic little nook and there pour out her grief to the solitude of the silent foothills.

At five o'clock Brown Dick was black with sweat and dust and streaked with foam, but still pressed gamely on, and Randy, with white, set face, in which deep lines of pain and weariness were graving, gazed fixedly ahead with burning, fevered eyes, conscious that strength was failing him and praying for the first sight of those dun adobe walls of Jose's sheltering ranch.

Just at seven o'clock of the early winter's evening the denizens of Jose's heard the thud of horse's hoofs at the gate and the hail of a feeble voice. Jose's wife at that moment was in half-tearful talk with Mrs. Hayne, who from dawn till dark had been on watch—hoping against hope for tidings of Florence, and who now, wearied with long vigil and well-nigh worn out with anxiety, was lying down in search of sleep. Gould, veteran soldier and surgeon that he was, could no longer bear the suspense and inaction at the ranch. He had borrowed one of Jose's horses, and, with a half-breed Mexican for guide, had ridden away at dawn, hoping to strike Grafton's trail and follow him into the mountains, whither he was supposed to have ridden in pursuit of the Apaches. Gould was a skeptic. He said he didn't believe a dozen Apaches were off their reservation. He didn't believe half a dozen had ventured over the New Mexican line, and if any had he was willing to bet a month's pay they were not hostile. This was comforting to Mrs. Hayne, but Jose's people were not so easily cured of their conviction. By the time the rumor reached the ranch, brought in by stampeded herdsmen, no one of whom had seen an Indian, but each of whom could tell tremendous tales of their doings in the valley, it was declared that at least 50 of Victorio's old band were raiding the Santa Clara and might be expected to assault Jose's at any moment. The corral was filled, therefore, with scraggy cow ponies and swarthy men, and the sight of an officer, one-armed, pallid, exhausted, reeling earthward from an equally exhausted steed, was all that was necessary to complete the panic. Over half the Mexicans present made a mad rush for the subterranean refuge known as the "dug-out," and but for a couple of troopers who had put into Jose's with lamed and useless horses Randy would have gone headlong to the ground. They caught him just in time, and bore him inside the ranch, where the sight of his death-like face drove Jose almost frantic. But the troopers knew what to do for their officer and speedily brought him round, and when he asked for Dr. Gould they told him of his going, and Randy's next demand was for coffee and a fresh horse.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A PERFECT DOCUMENT.

Criticisms of the Declaration of Independence Are Easily Disposed Of.

The Declaration is divided into two parts: First, the statement of certain general principles of the rights of men and peoples, and, second, an attack on George III. as a tyrant, setting forth in a series of propositions the wrongs done by him to the Americans which justified them in rebellion. Criticism has been directed first against the attack on the king, then to the originality of the doctrines enunciated, then against the statement of the rights of man, Jefferson's "self-evident truths," and finally against the style.

The last criticism is easily disposed of. Year after year, for more than a century, the Declaration of Independence has been solemnly read in every city, town and hamlet in the United States to thousands of Americans, who have heard it over and over again, and who listen to it in reverent silence and rejoice that it is theirs to read. If it had been badly written, the most robust patriotism would be incapable of this habit. False rhetoric or turgid sentences would have been their own death warrant, and the pervading American sense of humor would have seen to its execution. The mere fact that Jefferson's words have stood successfully this endless repetition is infallible proof that the Declaration has the true and high literary quality which alone could have preserved through such trials its impressiveness and its savor. To those who will study the Declaration carefully from the literary side, it is soon apparent that the English is fine, the tone noble and dignified, and the style strong, clear and imposing.—Senator H. C. Lodge, in Scribner's.

STORY OF THE GREAT LAKES.

A Fruitful Source of Material for the Writers of History and Fiction.

There is much of thrilling interest, much of romance, much of daring surrounding the shores of these lakes, much in a study of the early periods of their history, for the historian or the novelist. A long time ago—so long it seems like ancient history to us—the first white man, probably about the middle of the sixteenth century, saw these lakes. It is not so easy to fix a date for this event, but we know that as early as 1530 to 1540 the French priests, the voyagers and the coureurs de bois, the trappers and adventurers of the day, visited the eastern lake region on the north. They came with two messages: one bore tidings of the commerce, and proved that the French nation was alive to the value of the new country; the other told the story of the Christian religion. It were well, perhaps, to mention another message—a more or less baleful one—brought by the adventurers; for there were adventurers among these early discoverers—men who had no other motive than to seek the strange and the exciting, and to spend their days in the alluring and profitless occupation of seeing how many hairbreadth escapes they could enjoy, in how many scenes of pillage and robbery they could take part.

Those who have written so gracefully and elegantly of the early history of the regions surrounding the northern portions of the great lakes have but begun to tell the tales which will be told with more and more freedom of invention as the writers of the future come to appreciate more and more what a splendid storehouse of material lies in this Northland.—W. S. Harwood, in St. Nicholas.

No Novelty.

"I'm afeard," remarked Farmer Corntossel, "thet the period of usefulness fur that politician is about to be drawed to a close."

"What's the matter?" inquired his wife, "is it a case of overwork?"

"No," was the answer; 'tain't nothin' so onusual as overwork. It's a plain, old-fashioned case of overtalk.—Washington Star.

After the Concert.

Mr. Wellwood—How did you like Mme. Mebley?

Miss Highrocks—She was wretched.

"I'm astonished to hear you say that. I thought she was in fine voice."

"Oh, her voice may have been all right, but I'm sure the gown she wore never could have been made in Paris."—Cleveland Leader.

Not to Be Frightened.

Said the minister to an old lady of an irreligious disposition: "Woman! d'ye mind there's a place where there's wailing and gnashing of teeth?" "Ye'll no fright me wi' that," said the dame. "I've never ane left in my head to gnash wi'."—Household Words.

FUNNY FOLKS

A Problem for Her.

"Are you good at arithmetic, my dear?" asked Mr. Perkasie of his wife.

"I was accounted the very best arithmetician at school," replied Mrs. Perkasie with a touch of pride in her voice.

"I have a problem for you."

"State it."

"How can I buy $95 worth of presents with $15 in cash and no credit?"—Judge.

En Passant.

A maid—her name I will not give—
For years had dyed that she might live.
She dyed her cheeks, she dyed her lips,
And she likewise dyed her finger tips.
But she died at last and left a store
Of dyes, and now she'll dye no more.
—Chicago Daily News.

DISINTERESTED COUNSEL.

He—If you eat too much cake, you'll sure to be ill.—St. Paul's.

Unbeaten.

Who is the lightweight champion?
Who? Why, bless your soul,
The man in summer who sells ice,
And in winter time sells coal.
—N. Y. Journal.

Speaking from Experience.

Pupil—I wonder how it is that the blind receive more consideration from us than the deaf?

The Philosopher—The reason is plain, my son. It is because they are able to listen to our old stories and yet are unable to see our shady actions.—Ally Sloper.

One or the Other.

Miles—I'm celebrating the fortieth anniversary of my birth to-day.

Giles—And yet, judging from your appearance, no one would take you for a fool.

Miles—Why, what do you mean?

Giles—Nothing—only you're not a philosopher, are you?—Chicago Record.

Hard Luck.

Visitor—It's sad about the man who was found dead in his room from blowing out the gas.

Hotel Manager—Yes, it's too bad. Nobody has claimed the body, and as he paid his last dollar for the room we don't know who is going to pay for the gas.—Chicago Journal.

Winter Weather.

The crimson of the forest leaves
When the autumn days are gone,
But the toper's nose grows redder
As the winter weareth on.
—Tammany Times.

MORE TRAIN WRECKING.

The Bench—What's the charge, constable?

Peeler—Prisoner was found putting his wife's mince pies on the railway lines, your worship!—Ally Sloper.

In a Nutshell.

The other day a wise one spoke.
So the words of wisdom ran:
Woman—she's always working
Embroidery or a man.
—Puck.

The Two Extremes.

Wiggs—I really can't help smiling when I see little Snapleigh out with that lanky wife of his, she looks so awfully tall with him.

Waggs—Yes, I daresay; but I can tell you she's very short with him at times.—Ally Sloper.

The Thing He Thought Of.

"Money, you know, is the root of all evil."

"I wonder if we'd have to root so hard for it if it wasn't?" — Chicago Daily News.

He Saw It, Then.

Jones—They say the girl Dawson married was cross-eyed.

Brown—Yes; but he never fully realized it until after her money was gone.—Puck.

At the End.

Lives of millionaires remind us
That although we slave and save
We must leave it all behind us
When we rumble to the grave.
—Cleveland Leader.

In the Same Business.

"So her husband is an editor?"

"Yes. But, good land! If there's anything in the way of news she can beat him publishing it abroad."—Baltimore Sun.

Agreeing with Her.

"Don't you think, Leonidas," said Mr. Meekton's wife, "that women ought to be assisted in leading a perfectly independent and untrammeled existence?"

"Certainly, Henrietta," was the answer, "and I presume that is why so many of them consent to get married."—Washington Star.

English Livery Stable Joke.

Job Master—I m afraid, sir, I must ask you to pay in advance for the hire of the horse.

Amateur Rider—What's that for? Are you afraid that I shall come back without the horse?

Job Master—Oh, no; but the horse might come back without you.—Tit-Bits.

Disqualified.

"Poor Mrs. Motherdere!" exclaimed Mr. Meekton's wife.

"What has happened to her?"

"She had to decline our invitation to read a paper on the proper management of children because she was too busy looking after her family!"—Washington Star.

The Social Whirl.

Trotter—What has become of Struckile? When I left he was making desperate efforts to get into the first society.

Homer—By the time he got in the people who then composed the best society had bursted up, so he's now as badly off as he was before.—N. Y. Weekly.

Such an Obstinate Girl.

"I fear," said the fond mother, "that we will have to give our consent to Mabel's marriage to Mr. Jones."

"What's the matter," asked the close-fisted father. "Won't she elope?"—Chicago Post.

His Marriage.

An astronomical event
Is scheduled very soon:
The world will shortly be
eclipsed
Behind a honeymoon.
—Puck.

GREAT LUCK.

First Klondiker—You say you've struck great luck; did you find gold?

Second Klondiker—No I found a piece of bacon that somebody left in this hole.—Boston Herald.

Deception.

The man who dyes his hair and beard
Has finally to own,
Thinking others he deceives,
That he deceives himself alone.
—Detroit Journal.

Had a Good Time.

First Old Boy—Let me see, your son enjoyed a university career, I believe?

Second Old Boy (grimly)—Yes, he appears to have done nothing else—the bills are coming in still.—Ally Sloper.

A Hard Struggle.

Sympathetic Friend—And did your husband die peaceably?

Sorrowing Widow—Oh, I'm afraid not. We had three doctors.—Chicago Daily News.

Frank Indorsement.

Mrs. Hunt—From what I hear of your husband, I should infer that he is a man of iron will.

Mrs. Blunt—You're right he is, and pigiron, at that.—Richmond Dispatch.

The Pink of Modesty.

She—I'm not afraid of the best man living!

He—I hope not, dear. I don't think I ever gave you any reason to be afraid of me.—Yonkers Statesman.

A Pessimistic View.

In all vocations, it appears,
Men plan to cheat and rob;
Even an honest builder's work
Is, at best, a put-up job.
—Chicago Daily News.

POETICAL EXPRESSION.

"Oh, that I had the wings of a bird."—N. Y. Evening Journal.

Ante-Mortem.

When he hasn't a brake on his wheel
At the top of the hill—it is said
That the inquest may later reveal
A very large break in his head.
—Judge.

An Object of Pursuit.

"It is money that makes a man important."

"I don't know; it seems to me I'm of more importance when I haven't any money."—Chicago Record.